

IN THIS ISSUE

Transitions Within CIT



There's a short but telling mantra proudly embraced by rugby players, regardless of their size, ability and experience.

**"No guts.
No glory."**

It's a phrase that cuts to the heart of the matter. Rugby players know – that it's what you have on the inside that makes the difference. No matter how fit you are, how smart you are, or how strong you are, if you don't have "guts", well, no glory. The rigors of the game reveal the character of the players.

So how (you're wondering) ...
(Continued on page 2)



From ^{the} Director

Al Graeff

GUTS AND GLORY? *(Continued from cover)*

... do the guts and glory of rugby apply to our CIT relocation?

Well, as CIT prepares a major relocation to new space at 10401 Fernwood Road, Bethesda, Maryland, the rigors of transition have revealed the quality and character of our teammates. It takes guts to make tough management decisions, especially when the rewards of those decisions are not immediate. And yes, like a well-played rugby match, there have been a few collisions, a minor head knock or two, and an occasional call from a good referee along the way.

It takes dedication, enthusiasm, and tenacity to coordinate a relocation of this scope. From negotiations to installations, there are many players involved in many levels of CIT's relocation. The men and women of CIT's Division of Network Systems and Telecommunications (DNST) provide the guts for the game. A ripped out LAN closet or a network schematic just scratches the surface of their responsibilities. Likewise our Administrative, Executive Office, and OPEC colleagues have spent many hours negotiating, planning, and executing the details of our move.

It takes vision to look at this and visualize that, and on behalf of CIT, thanks to the many team players who are working to make it happen, including the Fernwood Project Team, Fernwood Furniture Committee, and the Fernwood Move Contacts.

Dear CIT Colleagues,








In the last issue of *The Center Link*, *Where CIT Connects*, I remarked upon the caliber and constancy of our co-workers. This issue of *Center Link* focuses on transitions within CIT, and how we are meeting the challenges of change. Notable changes include the retirement from federal service of one of our distinguished colleagues, Perry Plexico, and the arrival of our Deputy Director, Gary Christoph, Ph.D.

Our feature article focuses on our upcoming move to consolidated space at 10401 Fernwood Road, Bethesda, Maryland. As we expected, planning the CIT move has been intensive and time consuming. We look forward to a smooth relocation thanks to the coordination and teamwork of many CIT staff.

The details of what we do here may vary. Whether it's coordinating a complex move, designing databases for biomedical research, or building an IT network, we are committed to excellence.

Enjoy.

Al

	Roy Bohr	Linda Buie	Richard Charles	Scott Collins		
Melvin Mason					Cassius (Clay) Smith	
Paul Hill						Cheryl Moxley
Kevin Davis						
Tom Defeo				Cyrus Mirakhor		
	Bill McFadden	Dalphine Queen	Koren Waters	Ed Zebart		



Staff Profiles



In this issue of The Center Link, *Where CIT Connects*, we touch on many elements of transition. **CIT's Deputy Director and Chief Operations Officer, Gary Christoph, Ph.D.**, is a fitting colleague to profile in this issue. In the course of his personal and professional choices and challenges, Gary has initiated, managed, embraced, and survived many elements of change.

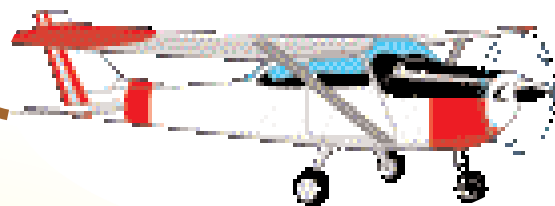
When he was a Computer Systems Security Officer with the Los Alamos Integrated Computing Network, Los Alamos National Laboratory, he could walk out the door, hike for five minutes, and be alone - really and truly alone - transformed in the wide-open wilderness of New Mexico. That solitude is harder to come by in Baltimore or Bethesda, but he's learned how to handle new territory.

When Gary left Los Alamos for the challenges of serving as Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), he did so knowing that CMS would undergo profound organizational transition. After five very full years at CMS, Gary comes to his new role at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Center for Information Technology (CIT), confident that transition is an opportunity for growth. While he welcomes change, Gary was willing to share a few core management beliefs that are fixed points on his chart:

1. People deserve to enjoy their work in a vibrant place.
2. People deserve to work in an environment of trust.
3. People deserve managers who foster insight and understanding, and ask the right questions of the right people.

Hobbies?	Flying
Pets?	Two cats and a bull snake
Favorite Operating System?	CTSS (Cray Time Sharing System)
Favorite music?	Pachelbel's Canon
Favorite video game?	Civilization II
Favorite tree, plant, or flower?	Belly flowers (alpine flowers you can only look at by getting down on your belly)
Favorite color?	Bright yellow
Favorite vacation spot?	Alaska
Favorite holiday?	Saturday
Favorite beverage?	Lipton's finest blend of orange and black pekoe teas
Dream car?	Cessna 210
What is most important to you?	Being valued and respected for being the person I am.
What is your most important goal at CIT?	Being valued and respected for being the person I am.
Favorite adrenaline rush	Greasing a landing on a smooth runway

We were intrigued by his hobby, choice of dream car, and favorite adrenaline rush. His choices prompted a few extra questions, and we thought you'd enjoy his answers as he wrote them. This is a small deviation from previous practice ... but we're embracing change ... right?



Q: What do you love most about flying?

A: Literally: getting above it all. The freedom from the cares and woes of the earth, everything down there looks so orderly and neat, closer to the heavens is incredibly freeing, focusing on being one with the aeroplane and forgetting (being forced to forget, because of the demands of avigating*) all of the day-to-day issues and intrusions on oneself, ...the list goes on and on... (*Editor's note: yes, he meant "avigating").

Q: When did you first solo?

A: 1965. It is absolutely amazing to me that I have been flying for almost four decades. It really has become a piece of me. I have something over two thousand hours as a pilot. I bought my first aeroplane for \$6,000 in 1968, when I was working for an oil company, and decided that if I were to be drafted I should try to do the things I might never again get a chance to do.

Q: What was the most awe inspiring and/or scariest thing you've ever experienced in flight?

A: Both awe-inspiring and scary: Thirty years ago, late one overcast, and therefore very dark and "new moon" night, over Iowa, I suddenly could no longer make out any farm or city lights, and the right half of my view out the windscreen began to glow a faint but eerie green. I had never experienced this before; it was both awesome and frightening until I realized the logical explanation - I had inadvertently gradually climbed up into the overcast and the green glow was from my starboard navigation light, out on the wingtip, illuminating the surrounding cloud. The left wingtip light is red, which did not reflect as well, and continued to appear black. The cloud obscured all the farmhouse and city lights. As soon as I figured this out, I climbed out into the brilliant clearness above. Eventually, I found a hole in the overcast and descended and landed safely. The thrill was in figuring out that magic always has rational explanations and that I could reason my way out of the situation without panic, and this survival skill has stuck with me ever since.

Q: What is your longest and/or your favorite flight?

A: New Mexico to Wisconsin, about 1993; I encountered a 60 knot (a knot is a nautical mile per hour, about 1.15 statute miles per hour) tailwind and was making nearly 200 mph groundspeed!

Q: What elements of flight do you draw upon in the hurly burly of the IT world (weather systems, coordinates, hydraulics)?

A: Current and up-to-date availability of web-based weather information, maps, and flight-planning has been the best and most exciting advance in decades!

Q: Last (and totally unrelated to flight) how's your daughter?

A: I am excited, worried, but very, very proud that my daughter has survived the first half of her 13-week basic training to become a United States Marine at Parris Island. She will be a new person when she comes out of that!



CIT Fernwood Move Team

CIT...on the Move!

<http://move.cit.nih.gov>

(Continued from page 2)

The scope of the CIT relocation to 10401 Fernwood Road has created an interesting dynamic for CIT personnel who regularly function as service providers to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) community. This time around, CIT's Division of Network Systems and Telecommunications (DNST) is both service provider and customer. DNST Branch Chief Paul Hill summed it up,

"Typically when we (DNST) work with an National Institutes of Health (NIH) Institute or Center (IC) - we are the service provider - the IC collects requirements - then we implement them. For our own Fernwood relocation, we've had two roles. The first - to collect requirements - and the second - to implement them. This double duty has definitely meant more pressure... expectations are higher - but this is what we do - and I'm proud we do it well."

From the installation of a new plasma screen display to wireless networking, 10401 Fernwood has been an interesting challenge for DNST, CIT and the contractors they work with.

CIT's Marian Dawson, Project Manager for the relocation, would concur. The CIT relocation has been many years in development. Marian has worked with CIT senior management from the initial request to NIH management for improved and consolidated space, through negotiations, planning, and now, to implementation. Marian is grateful for the time, expertise, and considerable effort devoted by so many for the benefit of their CIT colleagues.

The CIT move schedule for August 2002 is subject to change. Please check out <http://move.cit.nih.gov> for up-to-the-minute information on the relocation.

CIT Move Dates 2002	CIT Personnel – by Division	Moving from locations to 10401 Fernwood Road
Fri., August 16	Division of Customer Service (DCS) Division of Network Systems and Telecommunications (DNST) (partial)	Building 12 Complex
Tues., August 20 & Wed., August 21	Executive Office (EO) (partial) Office of the Director (OD) Office of Diversity and Employee Concerns (ODEC) Office of IT Architecture (OITA) Office of Planning, Evaluation & Communications (OPEC)	Building 12 Complex
Fri., August 23	Division of Enterprise and Custom Applications (DECA) DNST (partial) OITA (partial)	Federal Building Exception: DECA's Custom Applications Branch will join DECA's Administrative Data Base (ADB) Section at the 11 Democracy Building
Tues., August 27 & Wed., August 28	EO/Financial Management Office DNST Office of the Deputy CIO (ODCIO)	Executive Plaza South (EPS) 6100 Executive Blvd. Exception: DNST's Telephone Systems Infrastructure staff will remain at Executive Plaza South

In closing, what, you wonder, will the Fernwood Move Team do with their free time once this CIT transition is complete? We think they deserve a month or so to "field inspect" CIT's proposed satellite site



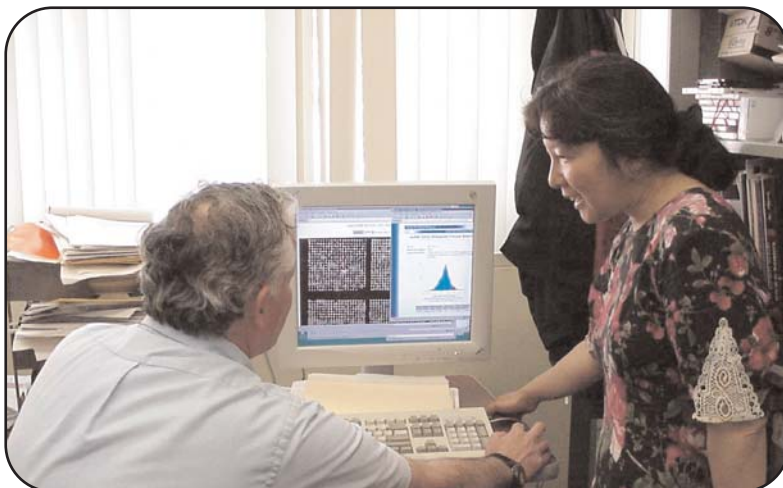


After the Logoff



Patterns. Threads. Planning.

Actually, the more you find out about Esther Asaki, the more her vocations make sense. Whether at work or at play, Esther Asaki fills her days with complex visual patterns. As an SRA contractor, Esther works as a



John Powell and Esther talk shop.

Systems Analyst with CIT's Division of Computational Bioscience (DCB). Esther is part of a team designing databases for biomedical research. These databases produce visual patterns that can be clues for scientific discovery. Esther is currently working on the National Cancer Institute (NCI) microarray gene expression project (mAdb), which provides a Web-based system for scientific researchers to upload and analyze their data. Led by John Powell, Esther's team at CIT includes: Xiopeng Bian, Carla Bock, Susan Castillo, John Greene, Robin Martell, Kathleen Meyer, Tammy Qiu, Jim Tomlin, Agara Sudhindra, Shyam Sundaram, Uma Shankavaram, and Liming Yang.

Ah, but outside her work at CIT, Esther's team spirit and her cultivated eye for pattern take a unique and wonderful spin - literally. As part of a "Sheep to Shawl" competitive team, Esther regularly participates in a challenging contest. The goal? Well, from one sheep, her small team must shear, wash the wool, comb, spin, and weave a shawl within a three-hour time limit, and then enter their final product in a juried competition. Esther and her teammates enjoy the challenge and have done well in several competitions.



Esther models one of her favorite creations.

Whether imagining delicate creations from spun wool, or teasing out the patterns in a biological database design, Esther has been able to apply her unique visual talents in meaningful ways both at home - and at CIT. We're willing to bet that her home décor isn't just neutral eggshell white.



In the spring of this year, CIT's Deputy Director, Perry Plexico, retired from long and distinguished federal service. Perry's family and many friends gathered at the Pooks Hill Marriott, Bethesda, Maryland, to both toast and roast him. Laughter and cheers framed the celebration.



Many CIT and NIH luminaries shared their insights on Perry's strength of character, keen intellect, and generous spirit.



As NIH CIO and CIT Director Al Graeff noted, "CIT is a richer organization from Perry's wealth of experience and exemplary leadership."

The Center Link, *Where CIT Connects* is produced as an internal publication for CIT employees by the CIT Office of Planning, Evaluation and Communications (OPEC).

OPEC welcomes all editorial comments and suggestions. If you have a news item, article idea, calendar event or photograph you'd like to share, please contact the The Center Link editorial team:

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